

Minutes of the New Jersey State Historical Records Advisory Board
8 June 2004

The meeting of the New Jersey State Historical Records Advisory Board was called to order at 11:10 a.m. on the above date at the Alexander Library of Rutgers University in New Brunswick. Present were members Ronald L. Becker, Nelson Chou, Lois R. Densky-Wolff, Lisa C. Mangiafico, Ben Primer, James F. Turk, Ethel M. Washington, Karl J. Niederer (coordinator) and Barbara Pepe (administrative assistant).

Mr. Niederer called the meeting to order and announced that it was being held in conformance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Ms. Pepe called the roll.

The minutes of the board's 18 November 2003 meeting were approved with one change: Mr. Primer asked that his name be changed from Benjamin to Ben. (Motion: Ms. Densky-Wolf, Second: Ms. Mangiafico).

Mr. Niederer reported on the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) administrative support grant awarded to the board in January 2004. In March 2004, Ms. Pepe was hired as a part-time administrative assistant to the board and coordinator.

Mr. Niederer reported that most board appointments were current as of 30 April 2004. However, two expected appointees, Mr. Primer and Ms. Washington, were not included with the group confirmed by the Governor in April. The Governor's Appointments Office has assured the board that this was due to a clerical error that will be corrected very soon.

Mr. Niederer reported that the New Jersey Historical Commission had received a legal finding indicating that SHRAB was ineligible to receive NJHC grants because it is deemed an agency of the State of New Jersey. The board's request for a mini-grant of \$2,500 to support SHRAB outreach services was therefore denied.

Ms. Pepe reported on web site development. She had analyzed the SHRAB site and recommended a series of significant changes and additions. A list of the suggested changes was circulated and discussed. Web site re-design, expansion of resources, and updates will be an ongoing task for the administrative assistant.

Ms. Pepe reported on her other outreach efforts on behalf of the board. At least two institutions, Monmouth County Archives and the United Methodist Archives at Drew University, are planning public events to celebrate Archives Week 2004, 11-16 October. Ms. Pepe asked that board members notify her if they hear of other Archives Week activities.

Ms. Pepe reported that she has created two databases for dissemination of SHRAB news and program information: one for members of the New Jersey Caucus of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC), and one for county archival, historical, and cultural organizations. Ms. Mangiafico expressed her concern that personal addresses and other information on MARAC members not be included in SHRAB's web site. Mr. Niederer affirmed

that the databases are for SHRAB use only and personal information from them will not be posted on the web site.

Mr. Niederer invited board members to become involved in promoting and participating in Archives Week activities at the state, county, and local levels. Mr. Primer suggested inviting NHPRC Executive Director Max Evans to activities during Archives Week. Dr. Turk suggested the possibility of connecting Archives Week activities to Humanities Week.

Mr. Niederer urged the board to encourage smaller institutions to apply for NHPRC grants. He hoped to develop a program of aggressive outreach for this purpose including web resources. He and Ms. Pepe are using New York SHRAB's web site as a model because they have done extensive work in this area.

The board then commenced discussion of plans for the annual SHRAB Conference on New Jersey's Documentary Heritage. The focus of the conference will be twofold: the impact of changes resulting from new state grant funding for public archives and records, and issues relating to professional archivists. Originally scheduled for May 2004, the conference was postponed due to the delayed hiring of SHRAB Assistant Barbara Pepe. The board agreed to reschedule the event on 10 November 2004, with 8 November as a back-up date. The probable venue choices are Rutgers University (New Brunswick) or the War Memorial (Trenton). Anticipated attendance will be about 100 persons. The board agreed to form an ad hoc committee to plan the conference; Mr. Becker, Mr. Primer and Ms. Densky-Wolf agreed to serve on the committee, along with Mr. Niederer and Ms. Pepe.

Mr. Niederer reported that the NHPRC had awarded a grant to the Newark Museum for processing their education-related archival holdings from 1909 to the present.

Ms. Densky-Wolf opened a discussion on whether the board should apply to NHPRC for a state regrant. Mr. Niederer stated that the board was eligible to apply for regrant funding. Mr. Primer asked that Ms. Pepe gather examples of regrant applications from other states for the board to review.

Mr. Becker requested that the board consider reapplying to NHPRC to fund the statewide manuscript cataloging project. Mr. Becker and Ms. Mangiafico agreed to work on this investigation. Mr. Niederer offered to contact Richard Cameron, NHPRC Director of State Programs, to see what the board can do to resuscitate the project, previously approved by NHPRC in 2001.

Mr. Niederer reported on the status of the state's new grant program for public records and archives. The program has an acronym: *PARIS* (Public Archives and Records Infrastructure Support). The program is funded by fees collected by county clerks for filing and recording deeds, mortgages, and a variety of other land records. During fiscal year 2004, statewide collections totaled \$70 million—40 percent (\$28 million) of which must be made available to county and municipal governments for archives and records management, preservation, and storage. The project will initially support state-coordinated needs assessment and strategic planning surveys in all 21 counties. The surveys and first-year grants will focus on preservation

services needs, and electronic records systems. Grants will also be awarded to the state's 12 most populous municipalities for strategic planning.

Dr. Turk asked if the board would review its Strategic Plan in 2004-2005, benchmark what has been accomplished, and identify what still needs to be done. Mr. Niederer explained that this going to be a key component of the first SHRAB Conference.

The next meeting of the board will be scheduled for Wednesday, 8 September 2004 at 10:00 a.m., with a back-up date of 22 September. The venue will be determined later.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m. (Motion: Mr. Becker; Second: Ms. Mangiafico)

Respectfully submitted,

Karl J. Niederer
Coordinator